

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claims 10 and 20-22 as follows:

1-9. (Cancelled)

10. (Currently Amended) A document processing system comprising:

an input unit for reading a storing means on a hardcopy document;

a document processing information extracting unit for extracting encoded document processing information, which includes a form or format information of the hardcopy document and at least one hardcopy document handling procedure to be executed in connection with the hardcopy document, stored in the storing means; and

a document processor for executing said at least one hardcopy document handling procedure,

wherein said at least one hardcopy document handling procedure includes identifying document and identifying document format by determining whether a format of the hardcopy document is available in a database.

11. (Previously Presented) The document processing system as claimed in Claim 10, wherein the input unit includes an image input means for reading a document image.

12. (Previously Presented) The document processing system as claimed in Claim 10, wherein the document processor executes the document handling procedure by reading character strings on the document in accordance with the document processing information.

13. (Previously Presented) The document processing system as claimed in Claim 10, wherein the document is a bill for payment or a commercial paper.

14. (Previously Presented) The document processing system, as claimed in Claim 10, further comprising:

a storing means identification unit for identifying whether any storing means storing the document processing information is on the document; and

document processing information database retrieving unit for retrieving a set of document processing information from a document processing information database of a document provider so as to assign the set of document processing information to the document, if the storing means identification unit does not identify any storing means storing the document processing information on the document.

15. (Previously Presented) The document processing system as claimed in Claim 14, said database is stored in the document processing system or is accessible via a network to which said document processing system is linked.
16. (Previously Presented) The document processing system as claimed in Claim 14, further comprising a document processing information defining unit for defining a new set of document processing information to be applied to the document if the retrieving unit can not retrieve any set of document processing information in the database of the document provider.
17. (Previously Presented) The document processing system as claimed in Claim 16, wherein the set of document processing information is selected from the database based upon a degree of similarity between a document format associated with the set of document processing information and a document image entered through an image input unit.
18. (Original) The document processing system as claimed in Claim 16, wherein the system notifies the document provider the newly-defined set of document processing information so as to be included in the database or to be embedded in other document by the document provider.
19. (Original) The document processing system as claimed in Claim 10, comprising a document processing charge billing means for differentiating charges billed to the document issuer according to whether document processing information is stored on the document.
20. (Currently Amended) A document generating software product, comprising:

a communication module for enabling a prospective document user wishing to have a hardcopy document made to notify a document generator of requirements regarding a desired hardcopy document layout and a desired hardcopy document handling procedure;

a document layout making module for making a document layout according to the requirements from said prospective document user;

a document candidate presenting module for presenting to the prospective document user document candidates made by the document layout making module;

a document selecting module for letting the prospective document user select a document candidate out of the document candidates presented by the document candidate presenting module;

a document processing information determining module for determining document processing information including a form or format information of the selected document candidate and the desired hardcopy document handling procedure;

a storing means module for selecting a storing means, encoding the document processing information, and for storing the encoded document processing information in the storing means; and

a document processor for printing on or embedding the storing means on the hardcopy document, and for executing the desired hardcopy document handling procedure in connection with the hardcopy document,

wherein said hardcopy document handling procedure includes identifying document and identifying document format by determining whether a format of the hardcopy document is available in a database.

21. (Currently Amended) A software product for providing a hardcopy document comprising a module for printing on or embedding in the hardcopy document a storing means, wherein said storing means stores encoded document processing information, which includes a form or format information of the hardcopy document and at least one hardcopy document handling procedure to be executed in connection with the hardcopy document, and the hardcopy document is subject to and readable by a document processing apparatus for executing said at least

one hardcopy document handling procedure in connection with the hardcopy document,

wherein said at least one hardcopy document handling procedure includes identifying document and identifying document format by determining whether a format of the hardcopy document is available in a database.

22. (Currently Amended) A hardcopy document having a storing means printed thereon or embedded therein that include encoded document processing information, which includes a form or format information of the hardcopy document and at least one hardcopy document handling procedure to be executed in connection with the hardcopy document, and the hardcopy document is readable by a document processing apparatus for executing said at least one hardcopy document handling procedure in connection with the hardcopy document,

wherein said at least one hardcopy document handling procedure includes identifying document and identifying document format by determining whether a format of the hardcopy document is available in a database.